

Durham Area Action Partnership Minutes of the Board Meeting

Wednesday 23 March 2022

(Virtual Meeting - held via Microsoft Teams)

Board Members

Attendance: Cllr Liz Brown, Gary Tidbury, Parish Cllr Maureen Boettcher, Cllr Lucy Hovvells, Cllr Richard Ormerod, Cllr Lesley Mavin, Cllr Eric Mavin, Victoria Ashfield, Ian Moore, Rebecca Ashby, Cllr Christine Fletcher, Lee Alexander, Alice Wilkes, Dave Clarke, Jen Straughan-Hawley, Rev Joanne Thorns, Simon Bartlett, Paul Howard, Chris Tindale

AAP Officer

Attendance: Craig Morgan – AAP Co-ordinator
Wendy Lavelle – Community Development Project Officer
Lyndsey Hunter – Community Development Project Officer
Marie Ainscough – AAP Support Officer

Presenters:

Sarah Glynn – Durham County Council
Owen Cleugh – Durham County Council

Forum Members: 12 forum members attended the meeting

Apologies Board: Rebecca Eves, Sarah Burns, Colin Stephenson

Apologies Forum: Phillip Hancock

1 [Introductions and Apologies](#)

Ian Moore, Chair welcomed everyone to the virtual Durham AAP Board Meeting.

Apologies for absence, [as above].

2 [Teams Etiquette and Participation](#)

Everyone was reminded of the meeting etiquette.

3 [Presentation: Libraries for You](#)

Sarah Glynn delivered a presentation on Durham's Libraries. Durham County Council want views on what people need from County Durham libraries and want to hear on how library services should be delivered in the future.

For further information and to have your say visit the Durham County Council website

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/25827/Durham-Libraries-For-You-get-involved->

The deadline for comments is 5.00 pm on Friday 1 April 2022.

The meeting was open for questions/comments –

- A forum member stated how important libraries and said ‘Do not close Millennium Place Library (It should be noted that this is not one of the proposals).
- Will the libraries service be effected by the Boundary Commission review? *No it will not.*
- Is there capacity for Belmont library to re-open full time again? *The consultation is about asking these questions.*
- Will the libraries work with other agencies visibly in the library eg will any charities be having a presence in the libraries? *If libraries / VCS organisations are interested in this it can be explored.*
- Will there be some assistance in the libraries for people who struggle with the ‘borrow box software? *Libraries will be looking to make services as accessible as possible and if this is an issue it should be noted in the consultation survey.*
- Would like to see the Wellbeing Service more accessible in our communities; Covid testing was available through the library services; could play/children’s development be incorporated in the consultation? *The Libraries Service is hoping that this comes through strongly in the consultation.*

The Chair thanked Sarah for her presentation.

4 [Presentation: Public Space Protection Order for Durham City](#)

Owen Cleugh delivered a presentation on the Public Space Protection Order for Durham City. Durham County Council are wanting people’s views on the extension of the existing Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in Durham City which bans the drinking of alcohol in public spaces. They also want views on the potential to bring in a PSPO to make aggressive begging in the city an offence.

For further information and to have your say visit the Durham County Council website

[Consultation on making drinking alcohol in public and aggressive begging in Durham City an offence - Durham County Council](#)

The deadline for comments is 5.00pm on Friday 29 April 2022.

The meeting was open for questions/comments -

- The neighbourhood Inspector voiced their support for what they saw was a key piece of legislation.
- Are we accepting of people for eg ex-prisoners when we are offering housing? *Housing Solutions work with anyone who has a housing need.*
- Is the outreach support worker in addition to the changing lives member of staff? *Yes, this is the Housing Solutions officer*
- Are people's views limited to these two activities or will others be considered? *The consultation is just about these two elements.*
- Are there issues with people begging in cars (this was an incident that happened to an AAP Board Member)? *No it was felt this was an isolated incident.*
- Does the generosity of students attract people to the city to beg?
- It was commented that some people who are offered housing are removed for the slightest misdemeanour which can put people back on to the streets. *This issue will be raised with Housing Solutions at the next Rough Sleepers Action Group meeting.*
- Concerns were raised with aggressive begging in the city.
- Confusion particularly around social media and aggressive begging. This is not clear in the consultation. Can it be clarified? *Yes this can be looked at and the wording changed/clarified. How the PSPO is defined, and the language used can be commented on as part of the consultation.*
- Is aggressive begging a Police issue rather than a County Council issue? *The powers the wardens have is one of the tools that can be used to tackle this issue.*
- What provision is there to get the views of the people on the streets around this consultation. *This could be done through the rough sleepers action group.*
- Who do we complain to? It is preventing people from going out. People with hidden disabilities can feel intimidated. *Complaints should be made to the wardens and/or police depending on the nature of the incident.*
- Some people disagreed with the approach to tackling this issue.

- How do we report dogs attacking members of the public in open spaces? *This should be reported to the wardens or if a dog is dangerously out of control; the police should be called. There is a PSPO relating to dangerous dogs which give authorities extra powers. Inspector Dave Clark said he would get someone to look into identifying the owner.*

5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The Chair reviewed the previous minutes for matters arising, actions and accuracy. There were no matters arising.

The minutes of the meetings held on 13 December 2021 and 22 February 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

6 Neighbourhood Questions

None.

Craig said he was still waiting for a response in relation to a question from St Nicholas Community Forum and agreed to chase it up.

7 AAP Funding Update

- ❖ 13 Area Budget projects had been approved and 4 projects are currently with the funding team to be appraised
- ❖ £138,000 of projects had been approved, attracting £131,000 of match funding
- ❖ £190,000 of funding had been approved leaving circa £55,000 remaining which can be carried over into next year
- ❖ 34 Neighbourhood Budget projects had been approved totalling £141,000
- ❖ 40 Small Grants projects had been approved totally just over £20,000
- ❖ The 2022-23 budget is to be confirmed and will be agreed over the next few months

8 Project Approvals / Task Group Feedback

Project Approvals / Task Group Feedback

Covid Recovery and Emerging Issues

Task Group Feedback

The last meeting of the Covid Recovery and Emerging Issues Task Group was cancelled; there were no proposals to consider at this meeting.

Towns and Villages Funding Update

Cllr Liz Brown, Chair of the Towns and Villages Task Group provided an update on what had been discussed at the meeting held on 10 March.

9 Neighbourhood Budgets

The following neighbourhood budget projects were shared with the Board -

Name of Scheme: South Terrace, Framwellgate Moor - Unadopted
Carriageway Surfacing

Councillor(s): Wilkes / Hopgood / Simmons

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £5,656.44

Name of Scheme: Nevilles Cross Flower Towers

Councillor(s): Brown / Scott

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £1,800.00

Name of Scheme: School Steel Band - West Rainton Primary School

Councillor(s): Kellett

Interest Declared: Yes, Governor at School

Amount: £5,000.00 Note: £2,500 from this year and £2,500 from next year's allocation

Name of Scheme: Nevilles Cross CCTV Camera

Councillor(s): Brown / Scott

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £1,500.00

Name of Scheme: Diamond Terrace Installation of Handrail

Councillor(s): Freeman / Ormerod

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £5,454.61

Name of Scheme: Cheesy Waffles Project

Councillor(s): Fletcher

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £1,000.00

Name of Scheme: A167 Treebelt Ecological Improvements

Councillor(s): Wilkes / Hopgood / Simmons

Interest Declared: No

Amount: £5,075.00

The Board was happy to approve the projects and the interest as declared.

10 Co-ordinators / Chairs Update

Co-ordinator's Update

- The engagement functions of the County Council are being reviewed this year and will include the AAPs. There will be an external organisation

reviewing the engagement process and the Board will be involved in this as well as forum members and those who had been supported by the AAPs.

- Craig had been involved in looking at the concept of social value and how this will be linked with the building of the new school in Belmont (Contractors giving back to the local community). He will be speaking to the Belmont Ward Councillors re this.
- Work continues with the Lowes Barn Community project. Looking at costs from builders.
- Working with organisations who had helped out during the recent storms. Talking about the lessons that can be learnt and this will be fed back to the Civil Contingency Unit to look at a better response next time.
- Barbara Williams, Community Development Project Officer had been off sick due to ill health. She will not be returning to work and is taking her retirement.

Chair's Update

In the absence of Ian Moore, Cllr Liz Brown attend the Countywide Funding Meeting and reported that all the funding had been allocated.

11 Partner Updates

Fire and Rescue Service – Arson Reduction

Ian Moore, the fire representative on the Board provided an update on deliberate fires. A campaign had begun; and crews are visiting schools and virtual online classrooms in the run up to the Easter holidays. He also gave a brief overview on refuge, grass fires/wildfires, reporting fly tipping; Board Members had previously received a copy of the update.

Durham University

- Information regarding the situation in Ukraine and the University's response to it can be found [here](#).
- Re Covid, the use of face coverings is strongly recommended in crowded and enclosed spaces; people are encouraged to get vaccinated and boosted. LFT home test kits are available for collection from campus for staff and students.
- We have teamed up with new partner, Housing Hand, to give students easier access to renting private property by offering a Rent Guarantor scheme. The scheme will benefit both students from the UK and from overseas by providing a UK-based guarantor in order to rent a home. This will avoid the need to produce 6 or 12 months' rent upfront, which is often the case when there is no sufficient guarantor in place. Find out more [here](#).
- [Team Durham Sports Camps](#) will return over Easter.
- The [Oriental Museum](#) is hosting an exhibition on Japanese storytelling.
- Cosin's Library (part of Palace Green Library) will be reopening in mid-April.

- Check out the website or [sign up to the Community Newsletter](#) for more events.
- Our first in-person graduation ceremonies since 2020 are taking place next week from March 28 to April 1.

There was no update from the Durham County Council representative on the Board.

There was no health update.

Durham BID

Paul Howard from Durham BID provided the following update –

- Dinosaur Day is taking place on Saturday at The Riverwalk
- Events will be taking place during Easter in the marketplace as well as St George's Day and plans are in place for the Platinum Jubilee weekend.

Rev Joanne Thorns, VCS representative on the Board highlighted that a lot of the voluntary groups supporting those with finance issues had seen a huge increase in people asking for help and support, funds, heating vouchers, use of foodbanks. The groups are expecting this to increase even further in April.

Lots of people had offered to home the Ukrainian refugees but the matching process in Durham is not up and running yet. Charities in Poland are saying there are not as many people wanting to come as we thought partly because they want to stay local to Ukraine.

Police

Dave Clarke provided a policing update. He explained that people in city centre who are begging for money aren't necessarily homeless. They can become more aggressive at night-time and people don't feel safe walking around the city centre. The Public Space Protection Order particularly in relation to alcohol does however help the Police in dealing with these issues. Funding is being put forward for Safe Streets 4. There had been an influx of youth nuisance and anti-social behaviour particularly in the outlying villages. An operation will be taking place in the city centre on Friday and Saturday night.

Smaller Councils

Double taxation. Smaller Councils are not pursuing this matter (majority accept DCC commitment)

Housing

Simon Bartlett from Believe Housing reported that Covid was having an impact on service delivery due to high levels of sickness. The supply chain for raw materials continues to pose some challenges. Very high demand for affordable

housing with a lot of applications coming through. Lower than normal turnover so the supply of housing is low. They are continuing to support tenants and others affected by the cost-of-living increases.

12 Any Other Business

Board Workshop Notification

Craig will work with the Chair and the Vice Chairs to set some dates for a Board Discussion Workshop to look at the AAP priorities and how we allocate funding.

Craig had sent a reminder email to Board Members about aligning Board Champions to projects. This is something which started pre-Covid and it would be good to get an active relationship with those projects which Durham AAP had funded and this will be reported back to the Board.

13 Date and time of next meeting

- 27 April 2022, 6:00pm – Annual General Meeting and Board Meeting. This will be a face-to-face meeting held in Durham Town Hall.

Everyone was thanked for their attendance and the meeting closed.